

SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

INTRODUCTION TO NRCS

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SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Introduction

Key to an effective orientation is helping employees feel a part of the NRCS team. Orientation is the first step in fostering a sense of pride in the mission of NRCS. It helps the employee understand NRCS organization and programs as well as the benefits available to Federal employees. Orientation is an opportune time for you to begin building a working relationship with the new employee

As the supervisor, you are the key to a successful orientation. The following guide will help you achieve this success. You may need to modify the guide for employees who transfer from other Federal agencies into NRCS. Since the guide was prepared as a general reference, not all area and field offices will have all the facilities and benefits describe

Useful References

Discuss the following references with the new employee

- NRCS General Manual -NRCS policies and procedures
<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov>
- Equal Opportunity - employee grievances and administrative appeals
http://www.eeogov/federal/fed_employees
- NRCS Oregon website - links to human resources, employee information, responsibilities/conduct and much more
<http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov>
- NRCS Oregon SharePoint - human resources information and tools
<https://nrcs.sc.egov.usda.gov/west/or>

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Using This Guide

This guide contains important orientation information, including a checklist on pages 4-9, to ensure that important information is presented to the employee. Please discuss each item on the list with the employee during their first few days with NRCS.

After orientation, the supervisor and employee should sign and date the checklist. Keep the original guide and send a copy of the last page to Human Resources. You should use your own judgment as to whether the following information can be presented in one sitting or in several.

Employee Orientation

Information and forms are typically provided by Human Resources to the new employee prior to his/her first day on the job. The type of appointment determines which forms the employee is to complete. Forms may include:

Form Number	Subject / Title
AD 349	USDA Employee Address
FMS 2231	FastStart Direct Deposit Sign Up Form
OF 306	Declaration for Federal Employment
SF 85	Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions
SF 144	Statement of Prior Federal Service
SF 177	Statement of Physical Ability for Light Duty Work
SF 181	Race and National Origin Identification
SF 256	Self-Identification of Handicap
SF-1152	Unpaid Compensation, Designation of Beneficiary
SF 2809	Employee Health Benefits Election Form
	Health Benefits Program (FEHB) Premium Conversion Waiver/Election Form
SF 2817	Life Insurance Election: Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program
SF 2823	Designation of Beneficiary, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program
WF-5226	Pre-Appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration
TSP-1	Thrift Savings Plan Election Form
TSP Booklet	Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees
W4	Federal and State Withholding

You should verify that the forms were completed and returned to Human Resources for processing. In addition, complete the SF-61 Appointment Affidavit and the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification on the employee's first day. Send the completed forms to Human Resources. If you have questions, please contact HR.

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The next part of the orientation is your opportunity to welcome the employee and explain his/her duties and responsibilities, and your expectations as to job performance. Use this checklist to make sure you don't miss anything, and be sure to make time for questions.

Employment Facts (Refer to *General Manual 360* as shown)

Appointment

- ☐ Job title, grade series, salary, step increases, and promotion potential
- ☐ Nature of appointment and duration or limitation if appropriate
- ☐ Probationary period

Work Schedules

- ☐ Work week
- ☐ Core hours
- ☐ Lunch period
- ☐ Various work schedules, part time, full time, intermittent

Pay (Part 407)

- ☐ Pay periods and pay days
- ☐ Delivery of pay checks, direct deposit
- ☐ Length of time before receiving first paycheck
- ☐ Pay deductions, mandatory and optional
- ☐ Savings bonds
- ☐ Combined Federal Campaign
- ☐ Allotments

Leave (Part 415)

- ☐ Annual
- ☐ Sick
- ☐ Holidays
- ☐ Approval policy

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Insurance (Part 417)

- ☐ Health insurance, primary provider, FEHB
- ☐ Dental and Vision plans, FEDVIP
- ☐ Life insurance, FEGLI
- ☐ Beneficiary forms

Retirement (Part 416)

- ☐ Type of coverage, FERS
- ☐ Information booklets
- ☐ Beneficiary forms
- ☐ Thrift Savings Plan
- ☐ Social Security

Standards of Conduct (Part 413)

- ☐ Integrity
- ☐ Political activity
- ☐ Labor relations and management relations
- ☐ Employee Assistance Program - purpose and procedures

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Job Overview

Introduction

- ☐ Introduce employee to co-workers.
- ☐ Arrange for employee to meet managers of other USDA agencies as appropriate.

Tour of the Work Location

- ☐ Conduct a tour of the immediate work area, location of telephones, message center, mails boxes, typing, support, etc.
- ☐ Arrange an overall tour of the facilities to include health unit, eating locations, rest rooms, personnel office, and bulletin boards.

Office Procedures

- ☐ Discuss how work is assigned and reviewed.
- ☐ Explain the routing and clearance procedures for correspondence.
- ☐ Point out frequently used internal forms, where they are kept, and how they are to be used.
- ☐ Explain NRCS procedures for national and state bulletins and other directives.
- ☐ Explain the safety and health practices applicable to the office work environment.

Organization Information

- ☐ Explain how the work unit, co-workers, and the new employee contribute and relate to the mission and organization of NRCS and USDA.
- ☐ Talk about the customer service aspect of the employee's position and the organization.
- ☐ Discuss NRCS commitment to quality products and services.
- ☐ Give examples of NRCS programs and conservation legislation.

Working Relationships

- ☐ Working in an agricultural service center or being co-located with other agricultural offices.
- ☐ Working with soil and water conservation district employees.
- ☐ Working with members of the public.

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Expectations

- ☐ Provide the employee with a copy of his/her position description and review the duties and responsibilities.
- ☐ Explain how the employee's performance contributes to the performance accomplishments of the work unit.
- ☐ Discuss the work unit's plan of operations and any other work objectives.
- ☐ Discuss any probationary period which the employee may be serving and assessment of performance during this final step of the selection process.

Performance Appraisal Worksheet, Reviews, and Performance Appraisals

- ☐ Discuss the need to establish performance elements and standards within 30 days of the reporting date.
- ☐ Identify the critical elements of the position.
- ☐ Describe how performance is measured and documented.
- ☐ Within 30 days, develop and sign (employee and supervisor) the established performance elements and standards.
- ☐ Identify any routinely scheduled work reviews.
- ☐ Discuss the need for periodic performance reviews; quarterly is optional, and half-year is mandatory.
- ☐ Discuss the end-of-year performance appraisal process.

Employee Recognition

- ☐ Explain the various types of employee recognition.
 - Non-monetary awards, letters, and certificates.
 - Monetary awards such as spot awards and quality step increases.

Merit Promotion and Placement

- ☐ Explain how positions can be filled through noncompetitive procedures such as lateral reassignments, and through competitive procedures such as selection from a vacancy announcement.
- ☐ Discuss the agency vacancy announcement system and how jobs are advertised.
- ☐ Discuss how an employee would apply to a vacancy announcement.
- ☐ Discuss the various types of career ladders.

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Employee Development

- ☐ Explain how the employee will be trained for the current position.
- ☐ Explain the preparation and use of the individual development plan.
- ☐ Discuss other career development opportunities (AgLearn, technical training, NRCS management training curriculum, and self-development activities).

Rules of Conduct

- ☐ Stress the NRCS policy of avoiding conflict of interest and not accepting gratuities. Refer to annual training in AgLearn.
- ☐ Explain procedures for reporting bribes.
- ☐ Grievance procedures.
- ☐ Privacy Act and Freedom of information.
- ☐ Use of Government vehicles.

Emergency Procedures

- ☐ Discuss emergency procedures for fire or other evacuations.
- ☐ Explain weather-related emergency procedures. Provide the NRCS emergency hotline number: 1-866-856-1920, ext. 8.
- ☐ Provide employee with emergency telephone numbers.
- ☐ Request the employee's emergency notification information.
- ☐ Explain procedure for reporting an on-the-job injury or accident, and discuss workers compensation policies.
- ☐ Point out the location of first aid facilities or health unit.

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Security

- ☐ Discuss the use of LincPass.
- ☐ Point out the importance of reporting security violations and unauthorized or suspicious persons in restricted areas.
- ☐ Remind employee of the need to safeguard personal property (wallets, calculators, etc.) as well as government property and documents in their possession.
- ☐ Refer to annual information security training in AgLearn.

Orientation presented on _____
Date

Supervisor Signature _____ Date

Employee Signature _____ Date